R E P O R T R E S U M E S

ED 015 496 CG 001 055

FACTORS RELATING TO SUCCESS OF COPING WITH CRISIS. IMPACT OF FATHER ABSENCE IN MILITARY FAMILIES. II.

BY- FAGEN, STANLEY A. AND OTHERS

PUB DATE 4 SEP 67

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.25 HC-$1.72 41P.

DESCRIPTORS- *PERSONAL ADJUSTMENT, *PSYCHOLOGICAL PATTERNS, *MILITARY PERSONNEL, *FATHERLESS FAMILY, FAMILY ATTITUDES, FAMILY MOBILITY, FAMILY PROBLEMS, PARENT ROLE, PSYCHOLOGICAL TESTS, ADJUSTMENT PROBLEMS, MOTHER ATTITUDES, PARENT CHILD RELATIONSHIP, ANXIETY, STATISTICAL ANALYSIS, THEMATIC APPERCEPTION TEST, ANXIETY SCALE QUESTIONNAIRE, NEUROTICISM SCALE QUESTIONNAIRE, OBJECTIVE APPERCEPTION TEST, MILITARY LIFE QUESTIONNAIRE, CHILD PROBLEM CHECKLIST, PEABODY PICTURE VOCAB. TEST

THE PATTERN OF PREDISPOSITIONAL AND MEDIATIONAL FACTORS RELATING TO DIFFERENTIAL MATERNAL SUCCESS IN COPING WITH THE CRISIS CREATED BY FATHER ABSENCE IN MILITARY FAMILIES WAS EXAMINED. MOTHERS IN 23 FAMILIES WHOSE HUSBANDS WERE ABSENT ON EXTENDED MILITARY TOURS, WERE ADMINISTERED AN EXTENSIVE BATTERY OF SOCIOMETRIC AND PSYCHOLOGICAL TESTS PRIOR TO THE DEPARTURE OF THEIR HUSBANDS AND NINE TO 12 MONTHS LATER. A DETAILED ANALYSIS OF VARIABLES WAS MADE, AND INFERENCES ABOUT DIFFERENTIAL COPING PATTERNS OF THE SUBGROUPS WERE DRAWN. IT IS DOUBTFUL THAT PRIOR EXPERIENCE CAN LEAD TO MORE ACCURATE COPING. THE MOTHER'S REACTION TO STRESS IS OF PRIME IMPORTANCE IN UNDERSTANDING EMOTIONAL DISORDERS IN CHILDREN. INTERVENTION PROGRAMS, BASED ON THE IDENTIFICATION OF THE DISTURBED CHILD, AND ON STANDARD CRISIS DISCUSSION GROUPS FOR MOTHERS, APPEAR TO HAVE VALUE. FUTURE RESEARCH MAY ANSWER--(1) HOW FATHERS REACT TO CHANGES IN THEIR WIVES, (2) WHETHER PATTERNS OF CRISIS REACTION RELATE TO NON-CRISIS PERSONALITY FUNCTIONING, AND (3) WHAT RELATIONSHIP EXISTS BETWEEN COPING PATTERNS OF MOTHERS AND THE CHILD'S REACTION TO THE CRISIS. A SIMILAR, LONGITUDINAL INVESTIGATION, USING A LARGER NUMBER OF FAMILIES AND IMPROVED TECHNIQUES IS SCHEDULED TO BEGIN. THIS SPEECH WAS PRESENTED AT THE AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION CONVENTION, WASHINGTON, D.C., SEPTEMBER 4, 1967. (PR)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

ED015496

IMPACT OF FATHER ABSENCE IN MILITARY FAMILIES: II. FACTORS RELATING TO SUCCESS OF COPING WITH CRISIS[1,2]

Stanley A. Fagen,* Earl J. Janda, Stewart L. Baker, Eleanor G. Fischer and Laurence A. Cove

Walter Reed General Hospital

Introduction

For the military family programmed reassignment is a predictable occurrence. In any reassignment the soldier's family may be traveling concurrently with him, joining at a later date or remaining behind for the duration of the assignment. More so nowadays, receipt of overseas duty orders signifies impending father absence, as well as a change of residence for the family. Thus, almost every reassignment or "Permanent Change of Station" requires moving to a new location (whether near or distant). Mobility is consequently a primary characteristic of the military family's way of life.

When we consider the possible ways in which father absence has an impact on the military family, it becomes clear that mobility is only one of a large number of significant factors relating to the absence. Not only does the family struggle through the logistics of physical relocation, but it also seeks to cope with the stress on the homeostatic operations of the total family system. Withdrawal from a particular school and social milieu, entry into another, adjustment to the various gaps created by the loss of paternal roles (from breadwinning to disciplining to loving sponsorship), and maintenance of meaningful communication with an absent husband or father, all present serious challenges to the integrity and adaptive capacity of the family unit. In a very real sense the circumstances surrounding extended father absence in the military, predictable as it may be, comprise a crisis

---

*Now at Hillcrest Children's Center, Washington, D. C.

CG 001 055

situation. Mobility is one obvious dimension within this crisis situation which, along with many other factors, may threaten the existing family system.

It is generally accepted in crisis theory that a state of crisis may arise when an individual faces a life stress "related to the loss or threat of loss of his basic supplies (physical, psychosocial, or sociocultural), or to a novel situation which challenges him beyond his current capacity" (Caplan, 1965). The crisis situation presents some obstacle to fulfillment of important life goals and may come about accidentally or as a result of natural developmental forces (Caplan, 1964). In addition, the type of obstacle or "emotional hazard" may vary in character, "e.g., death of a loved one, change of occupational role, personal injury, or relocation of domicile" (Caplan, Mason, & Kaplan, 1965). It is when the environmental or external stimulus condition triggers a phenomenological reaction of upset and disorganization that the crisis situation may be viewed as creating a personal crisis state.

The literature on crisis theory and research has been substantially enriched during recent years (cf. Darbonne, 1967; Lazarus, 1966; Caplan, 1965). Important to the current consideration is the proposal that crisis is a normal life occurrence which is temporarily upsetting but open to adaptive or maladaptive coping patterns. Thus, Caplan notes that " . . . The previous history of a mentally healthy individual shows that he has passed through a succession of crises . . . and during each crisis a personality enrichment took place." (Caplan, 1965). A basic question being posed by crisis research is "What differentiates the group showing effective coping, who emerge from crises with improved mental health, from the group evidencing inadequate coping, who emerge with worsened mental health?"

In a previous paper we described some general impacts that father absence has on the military family and on personality development in young boys, using

intact families for comparison (Baker, Fagen, Fischer, Janda, & Cove, 1967). One of the most intriguing observations to us was the fact that "while most mothers experienced measurable unhappiness at the loss of their husbands, rarely did this unhappiness reach extreme or disorganizing proportions. It did seem clear that the separation event was recognized by the mother as a cause for changes in her own behavior, but that while most mothers believed they had changed for the worse, some reported more self-satisfaction with their overall functioning than before." From this observation our concern was drawn to the question of how the social and psychological vectors aroused by disruption of the previous equilibrium were dealt with.

The present paper seeks to examine the pattern of factors, both predispositional and mediational, which relate to differential adjustment to a father absence crisis situation. To this end, we attempted to tease out alternative coping patterns, and sought to conceptualize their possible relationship to antecedent (pre-crisis) and intervening (post-crisis situation) variables, as well as to an independent outcome criterion, i.e., success or adaptiveness of coping.

Insert Figure 1 about here

Method

Background

Beginning in December 1964, Regular Army middle rank enlisted men (Grades E-4 to E-6) stationed in the Washington, D. C. metropolitan area who were given an alerting order for overseas movement within 90 days were screened for possible inclusion in a longitudinal study of impact of father absence. Acceptance criteria required that the military man: (1) be married and have his family in the area; (2) have a 5- to 8-year-old male child living in the home; and (3) be on orders for an unaccompanied-by-family tour of at least

intact families for comparison (Baker, Fagen, Fischer, Janda, & Cove, 1967). One of the most intriguing observations to us was the fact that "while most mothers experienced measurable unhappiness at the loss of their husbands, rarely did this unhappiness reach extreme or disorganizing proportions. It did seem clear that the separation event was recognized by the mother as a cause for changes in her own behavior, but that while most mothers believed they had changed for the worse, some reported more self-satisfaction with their overall functioning than before." From this observation our concern was drawn to the question of how the social and psychological vectors aroused by disruption of the previous equilibrium were dealt with.

The present paper seeks to examine the pattern of factors, both predispositional and mediational, which relate to differential adjustment to a father absence crisis situation. To this end, we attempted to tease out alternative coping patterns, and sought to conceptualize their possible relationship to antecedent (pre-crisis) and intervening (post-crisis situation) variables, as well as to an independent outcome criterion, i.e., success or adaptiveness of coping.

Insert Figure 1 about here

Method

Background

Beginning in December 1964, Regular Army middle rank enlisted men (Grades E-4 to E-6) stationed in the Washington, D. C. metropolitan area who were given an alerting order for overseas movement within 90 days were screened for possible inclusion in a longitudinal study of impact of father absence. Acceptance criteria required that the military man: (1) be married and have his family in the area; (2) have a 5- to 8-year-old male child living in the home; and (3) be on orders for an unaccompanied-by-family tour of at least

one year to a non-combat area. These families were contacted directly and asked to participate in a research project designed to study characteristics and experiences of the military family. Participation was defined as including an initial visit to the outpatient department of Walter Reed General Hospital by both parents and son, and possible follow-up contacts later on. A sum of $10.00 was paid to each family participating, to cover incidental expenses incurred. All of the families had already received information on the alerting order for overseas movement when initially seen.

One to three months prior to father's separation from the home, the family was seen for an initial evaluation (Phase 1). Broad sociological and demographic data were obtained, and mother and father were separately interviewed to ascertain ratings on basic child-rearing variables factor-analyzed and reported by Becker et al. (1962). In addition, a battery of standard and experimental psychological techniques was administered to parents and child. The parent battery included: (1) The IPAT Anxiety Scale Questionnaire (Cattell & Scheier, 1963) and Neuroticism Scale Questionnaire (Scheier & Cattell, 1961), (2) Objective Apperception Test (modified from Stricker, 1962), (3) The Military Life Questionnaire (Pedersen, 1964), (4) Child Problem Checklist (a shortened version, Peterson, 1961), (5) The Family Role Inventory (developed by one of the investigators) and (6) objective inventories concerning family social participation and financial status. Each child seen was administered a Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, House-Person-Family Drawings, Blacky Test, and Lynn Structured Doll Play Test with additional experimentally-relevant situations. As can be seen, the social and psychological assessment was programmed to be rather extensive, requiring that family spend several hours with the research team.

Not less than six months nor more than nine months after the father

had departed for the hardship tour (some 9 to 12 months after he had received the original alerting order), the family was contacted for a second phase evaluation (Phase 2). Those families remaining in the Washington area were seen personally, and interviews and all objective measures were repeated. Only objective paper-and-pencil techniques were employed for those who moved out of town since data from them were collected via the mails. As a result, information was less complete for out-of-town families--mothers completing only items 1, 3, 4, and 6 from the Phase 1 battery, and son not being directly evaluated at all. However, with all mothers, special emphasis was placed on gaining insight into family experiences, including difficulties during the father-absent period.[3]

A total of 67 families were seen in Phase 1. Nineteen of these have, for a variety of reasons, been lost between Phase 1 and Phase 2, leaving an available pool of 46 families. At the time of this report we have completed Phase 2 evaluations on 40 of these families. Due to a number of factors, the orders of many of these families on overseas alert were changed or cancelled so that only 23 of the 40 families re-evaluated at Phase 2 were actually living through a hardship tour separation. It is this subsample of 23 cases that we are focusing on for the purposes of the present paper.

Present Operational Procedures

A. Operational Constructs:

1. Crisis Situation--refers to demonstrable changes in environmental circumstances, interpersonal ties or role requirements which can tax the adaptive capabilities of individuals. The condition of father absence is assumed to create a crisis situation which may have a differential impact.

2. Predisposition Variables--refers to those pre-crisis characteristics (environmental, personal, interpersonal, family or social) which may be related to or predictive of patterns of adaptation to crisis situations.

3. Mediating Variables--refers to those identifiable situational, reactive or behavioral factors which arise during the crisis state and which may be associated with patterns of coping with crisis situations. The configuration of mediating variables allows for inferences about psychological coping devices used.

4. Adjustment Variables--refers to the effects of crisis situations on behavior patterns. Both short-term and extended, long-term effects must be considered. Acute, disruptive effects need not coincide with or be predictive of the long-term effects on adjustment.

5. Anxiety Index--refers to the experienced and reported level of free floating, conscious apprehension and upsetness. The anxiety indicated can be considered an effect (an Adjustment Variable) of a crisis situation. It may confirm the existence of a state of crisis, especially in the early phase.

6. Adaptation Index--refers to an Adjustment Variable which takes into account the primary dimensions of a positive or healthy approach to problems. The Adaptation Index is independent of the Anxiety Index since anxiety may be handled in more or less adaptive ways.

7. Coping--refers to the behavioral or psychological process which is activated by the occurrence of threat or crisis, and which represents an attempt to master that threat. Coping strategies intervene between the crisis situation and the observed behavioral reaction; they include a cognitive appraisal of the total situation, and are inferred from observable behavior rather than being measured directly (cf. Lazarus, 1966; Murphy, 1962). And, borrowing from Lois Murphy, coping ". . . is a broad category with room to include different ways of dealing with life."

B. Measures:

1. Of Predispositional Variables--these variables were considered under

the headings of family style, prior separation experience, and mother's personality. Family style variables were collected from basic data and family life questionnaires, interviews, and social participation, family role, and family finance inventories. Prior separation experience was derived from accounts taken in joint parent interviews. Mother's personality variables were obtained from the Phase 1 scores on the IPAT Anxiety and Neuroticism questionnaires and Objective Apperception Test.

2. Of Mediational Variables--mediational factors were identified as either situational or reactive. Situational variables were tapped by items written into questionnaires mailed or administered for the Phase 2 evaluation. Reactive variables were measured in this manner as well as by analysis of change scores on the Child Problem Checklist, Military Life Questionnaire and Social Participation Inventory.

3. Of Anxiety--anxiety was measured by Cattell and Scheier's factor-analysis derived Anxiety Scale Questionnaire (1963). The authors report substantial correlations with psychological, behavioral, and laboratory tests of anxiety; higher correlation with psychiatric diagnosis of anxiety than any other known personality factor; and sharp differentiation between "normals and high anxiety cases." The IPAT Anxiety Scale was selected because it is ". . . primarily designed to measure free-floating, manifest anxiety level," and is sensitive to change.

4. Of Adaptation--the measure of adaptation reflected a conceptual modification of an existing standard test instrument, namely, Scheier and Cattell's Neuroticism Scale Questionnaire. These authors had stated that anxiety and neuroticism were separate but positively correlated variables, with anxiety comprising only one (albeit--a very important one) component of neuroticism. Through factor-analytic research it was determined that three other factors

contributed significantly to discrimination between "clinically-chosen neurotics and normals"—these factors being identified as" Tenderminded, Overprotected, Cultured, Protected Emotional Sensitivity (Component I); Depressive, Serious, Inhibited Tendency (Component F); and Submissiveness, Dependence (Component E). Since it appeared that the latter three factors were largely representative of characteristic modes of reacting to anxiety or upsetness, whether adaptive or nonadaptive, it was reasoned that these three factors bordered on coping devices or techniques for handling anxiety, and could be better conceived in these terms if distinguished from free-floating anxiety. Thus, our Adaptation Index became the cumulative score from Components I, F, and E only, or the total Neuroticism score minus the Anxiety component contribution.

C. Selection of Criterion Groups

The sample of 23 cases subjected to father absence was examined from the perspective of change in anxiety and adaptation from Phase 1 to Phase 2. In other words, difference scores were plotted for both dimensions of adjustment for each mother. On the basis of this procedure, four subgroups were identified after consolidation of cases into meaningfully shared categories, as seen in Table 1. Only 20 of 23 mothers are accounted for as data were incomplete for the remaining three.

Insert Table 1 about here

These four subgroups represent criterion groups insofar as the combination of anxiety and adaptation measures reflect differential adequacies or reactions in coping with the father absence crisis situation. While it did appear sound to consider lower anxiety or higher adaptation as indicating healthier functioning,[4] there was no way to determine whether subgroups separated by this criterion had anything in common, let alone distinctive coping patterns. This then became the major task of data analysis--the search

among the predispositional and mediational variables for discrete subgroup patterns--for similarities and differences.

The four subgroups are referred to and characterized as follows: (Group 1)--Anxious-Maladaptive--those mothers whose scores on the Anxiety Scale increased from Phase 1 to Phase 2, as did their maladaptive responses to the Neuroticism Scale Questionnaire; (Group 2)--Anxious-Adaptive--those mothers whose anxiety scores increased but who also increased in adaptiveness; (Group 3) Non-Anxious-Maladaptive--those mothers who evidence same or less anxiety after the crisis situation than before but who showed more maladaptive traits; (Group 4)--Minimal or No Change--those mothers who scored lower on either anxiety or maladaptiveness without change on the other, or who maintain a status quo on both dimensions. A person was considered not to have changed if her raw score on Phase 2 testing placed in the same standard sten interval as on Phase 1.

Findings

A. Predispositional Variables

Table 2 summarizes in profile form predispositional factors studied and their arrangement across subgroups. Because of the number of measurement and data collection techniques employed, ranging from those that do no more than nominal scaling to some that satisfy the strintent requirements of ratio scaling, data is represented in somewhat conglomerate fashion. Where entries were in terms of relative frequency, the standard procedure was to calculate percentages of subgroup members above or below the median frequency in the distribution of scores for the total sample (N=20). For example, if 75-85% of a subgroup fell below the median, an entry of "Relatively Low" was made. However, if 100% of a subgroup scored above or below the median absolute terms

were used, e.g., High or Low.

Insert Table 2 about here

---

1. Family Style Factors

Inspection of Table 2 reveals a solid core of homogeneity across subgroups as pertains to family religion, mother's education, employment history, and place of origin, and husband's military rank. Group 3 emerges as senior--with more years in service, more children, longer marriages, older husbands and wives, and higher earnings. Conversely, Group 2 is the most junior, being low on each of the above items. Clearly Group 2 was also the most financially burdened--with lowest income, biggest debts and least savings. And yet none of the fathers in this Anxious-Adaptive group reported second jobs and only one of six mothers was working. Group 4 has the only mothers who have held technical jobs and one had some college education.

All of these families have had a continuing, career investment in the service, with Group 2 at the halfway retirement point with 10 years in, and Group 3, the "short-timer," with only 3+ years to go before completing 20. None of the subgroups appears to be in a favorable financial position, as debts outweight savings in each instance.

Strong feelings of identification with military life are evident in Groups 1 and 2, whereas Group 4 mothers are consistently low in military identification. Group 1 also shows relatively high degrees of social engagement within the military. Group 3 displays more interaction with relatives than do the other subgroups. For all groups, however, overall social participation (e.g., entertaining, visiting friends, going to servicemen's clubs, etc.) is roughly the same with the order of socializing proceeding from military to civilian to relatives. Groups 1 and 2 are relatively low in social participation with relatives, and also in church attendance. Group 4 attends church regularly, the only subgroup to do so. Group 4 mothers are also relatively

high on marital dissatisfaction. Marital dissatisfaction is not noticeably different between the other subgroups. Finally, Group 2 exhibits a relatively high perception of problems in their sons while Group 4 ranks rather low in identifying child problems.

2. Prior Separation Experience

All of the subgroups have had considerable experience in the past with father separation and mobility. For these mothers the crisis situation of father absence is not entirely novel, although current conditions may be so difficult as to render prior learning useless. A dangerous hardship tour, a newborn infant, or a misbehaving teenager all may create additional or new stresses which override any benefits deriving from past experience.

Of the four subgroups, it is again Group 2 that at first glance looks least experienced--averaging the fewest number of moves and the lowest cumulative total of months of long-term separation from husband (the latter figure based on separations of six months or more only). However, when short-term separations are considered (those involving absences greater than 2 weeks but less than 6 months) Group 2 ranks second only to the No Change group in prior experience.

3. Mother's Personality Factors

The Objective Apperception Test was administered at Phase 1 to yield data on underlying emotional needs or feelings. The test required a rank ordering "from most to least descriptive" of five thematic statements for each of 10 standard pictures taken from the TAT. Four of the thematic choices correspond to underlying personality factors (i.e., aggression, rejection, insecurity, dependency); the fifth alternative offers a "neutral" category. In scoring OAT protocols a weight of 2 points was assigned to each thematic first choice (the Most descriptive statements), and 1 point

to each second choice. The distribution of resulting scores was then analyzed for subgroup differences, by examining percentages above and below the median score.

Table 2 indicates that Group 1 mothers scored relatively high in their attribution of aggression and rejection themes to inter- and intrapersonal situations. Group 4 was also relatively high in attribution of rejection, and in addition was least likely to use neutral judgements. Group 3 scored relatively high on insecurity, while Group 2 tended not to perceive interpersonal relationships in terms of rejection.

Turning now to the question of pre-crisis levels of anxiety and maladaptiveness, we can see that Group 2 mothers were most vulnerable on both factors. In fact, when their scores were compared to published norms for the general population of women (Scheier & Cattell, 1961; Cattell & Scheier, 1963), half of the group had anxiety scores higher than 85% of the general population and two-thirds scored in the lowest 15% on adaptiveness. Both Groups 1 and 3 tended to score higher in adaptive functioning at Phase 1.

B. Mediational Variables

Table 3 presents short statements or percentages for each of a large number of variables viewed as developing after and in reaction to the father absence crisis situation. Raw data has been translated into simplified summary remarks, the objective being to appreciate the configuration of these variables as reflecting coping patterns. The qualifying term "mostly" was used to indicate a shift in direction shared or reported by 2/3 to 4/5 of a given subgroup, whereas unqualified descriptors were applied to unanimous or near unanimous changes.

The set of "mediating" variables has been subdivided into those representing: (1) Social-Situational factors, and (2) Subjective-Reactive factors.

Insert Table 3 about here

1. Social-Situational Factors

The four criterion groups have in common the fact that health remains largely the same from pre-absence to post-absence phases, and that mobility becomes part of the total adjustment process. In Groups 1 and 4, wherein most mothers worked during the husband's absence and at least half took jobs after his departure, the financial situation remained about the same or did not worsen. However, Groups 2 and 3 mothers did not go to work and financial strain generally increased.

The fact that almost all families changed residence might be expected in view of general Army policy requiring that families give up post quarters when the soldier-sponsor goes overseas, but it is interesting to note the considerable percentage that move out of town. Only in Group 4 did less than half of the families relocate out of the area. There is a sharp trend toward moving near or with relatives in all groups, and out-of-town moves were always prompted by this goal. Only Group 1 reported poorer housing facilities after the move, three of five mothers indicating that conditions were worse. Despite our specific intention to study only families adjusting to a non-combat zone father separation, 2/5 of Group 1 and 2/4 of Group 2 fathers had a subsequent change of orders to a combat zone.

2. Subjective-Reactive Factors

All subgroups perceived their husband's attitude towards their handling of the family during the separation as supportive (e.g., "thinks I'm doing o.k.," "knows I take good care of the children," etc.). Correspondence between husband and wife is seen by the latter as frequent and mutual, although a few mothers in Group 3 reported an imbalance in favor of the husband.

When mobility was considered, there were marked differences as well as

similarities between the subgroups: Most mothers in all groups characterized their son's adjustment to his new surroundings as satisfactory, although wide ranging difficulties in the child's reaction to moving and father's leaving were reported. More dependency upon mother was noted by all subgroups, with most of Group 2 mothers reporting considerable upset in their son. In contrast, Group 1 minimized any reactive problems on their son's part, with most mothers simply reporting that the son accepted father's leaving.

With regard to their own difficulties in moving, Groups 2 and 3 mothers described practical problems of some consequence in transporting the family (e.g., "packing and moving," "getting situated again," "the long trip and then getting things arranged in the new house,") and readjusting to new social conditions (e.g., "a strange neighborhood as everyone here works and stays to themselves"). Group 1, however, tended to describe difficulties in terms of missing father, (e.g., "having Phil leave us," "knowing my husband wouldn't be here with me,") or had no comment to make. Group 4, without exception, reported no difficulties.

Each of the groups expressed a high degree of intellectual acceptance of the separation, coupled with appropriate worry about the husband's and family's welfare. At the same time, half of Group 2 expressed anger directly (endorsing "rather angry and upset about the whole thing," as a completion for the item: "When my husband left, I felt . . . ."), as did one of the five mothers in Group 3. No anger was expressed by anyone in Groups 1 or 4.

In terms of perceived hardships and mother's evaluation of change in herself since father went overseas, the following findings are noteworthy: (1) The Anxious-Maladaptive (Group 1) mothers suffered mostly from fear, loneliness and "bad nerves," and not one of them identified any favorable changes in themselves; (2) Groups 2 and 4 were similar in that they either mentioned

specific hardships (e.g., "children became touchy and threw temper tantrums easily," "there's been a financial problem," "it's much harder to get my shopping done") or made no mention of any. Furthermore, both groups were characterized by an abundance of positive remarks concerning the separation experience. For example, Group 2 mothers made comments like: "I've become more independent. I always relied on him to take me everywhere I had to go and centered everything I did around him. Consequently, I was disappointed quite a few times by upset plans. Now I see that I can do a lot of those things for myself and shouldn't center everything around my husband only. It's not good for either of us." Another mother responded: "I found out it was not as bad as I thought it would be . . . now I've been amazed more than once at how well I've handled it . . . by his being away maybe we love each other more, and it's given time to think. We can write and look back at things that were rather foolish--it has opened our eyes to how much we really love each other." One mother in Group 4 answered: "When their father just left the children missed him but then the summer meant they did a lot more than they would if he had been home. It's hard to get him out of the house--he's a homebody. I think myself too, it did a lot of good. I think I stayed home too much. In front of the TV. Now I'm reading more, and more interested in sports. The humdrum of the marital routine lets life slip away . . ."; (3) Group 3 displayed mixed feelings about the separation with some mother emphasizing growth aspects and others pointing out their sense of helplessness and loneliness. Ambivalence within the same person was common.

Each of the groups except for Group 4 considered their children more difficult to manage after father left, with rebelliousness and limit-testing behavior widespread. Most mothers perceived an immediate period of disturbance in the household, attributable equally to upset in the children and mother

herself. As time passed, however, mothers differentially came to grips with immediate tensions--the degree of felt adequacy in handling the children corresponding closely to mother's estimate of personal change. The following statements by Group 1 and Group 4 mothers are illustrative: "Yes, I'm afraid I have changed in some ways. I'm much more nervous and don't have very much patience with anyone, as I do when Bill is home. I also cry quite often now . . . (the children) miss their Daddy very much and have resented his being away by trying to get by with things they wouldn't have before just to get more attention from me" (Group 1). "It upset me at first, but then I tried to do my best and do as always . . . In my heart I know I've done well--it's been hard . . . Ricky was bothered very much at first . . . I know that. He always asked about his father, but he accepted it later same as I. We had so many talks about it . . . (Interviewer's question--"What changes have taken place since your husband left?") No changes. The household is still the same --in our activities--Church, Sunday School. I try to be involved. Anything I can go with them I go. But not that much changes." (Group 4).

Striking subgroup differences are seen in military identification scores following father absence. Thus, most of those in Groups 2 and 4 manifested lowered appreciation for military life, while Groups 1 and 3 showed increased identification (more so in Group 3). For example, a Group 2 mother who agreed with the statement, "If I were to do it over again, I very likely would (or hope that my husband would) decide upon a military career" at Phase 1, disagreed with it at Phase 2. Changes in this direction were prevalent among mothers in the Anxious-Adaptive and No Change groups. In contrast, the Anxious-Maladaptive and Non-Anxious Maladaptive groups evidenced changes in the opposite direction, e.g., shifting from strongly disagree to agree on the item: "I would like my son to have a military career"--as was done by one mother in Group 3.

Table 3 also presents changes in the nature of mother's social participation.

Groups 1, 2, and 3 were more inclined to attend Church after father absence, and all groups tended to increase their social interaction with civilians. Group 2 showed the clearest drop in military based social life, although Groups 1 and 4 were also down in this area. And, Group 2 showed the clearest rise in contact with relatives. On post-crisis situation evaluation, Group 2 was also the highest on total social participation.

Analysis of Changes on Adaptation Index

Table 4 presents changes in each of the three factor components of the Adaptation Index, namely, Tendermindedness, Depression, and Submissiveness. Entries are in terms of percentage change or simple verbal descriptions (e.g., "mixed" for shifts upward and downward).

Insert Table 4 about here

By inspection of Table 4, it can be seen that decreased adaptiveness in Group 1 is largely accounted for by increased Tendermindedness. Scheier and Cattell (1961) write that: "A certain 'softness' characterizes the high score pole, showing as kindness, gentleness, and helplessness . . . Largely, it is a matter of favoring unrealistic, emotional goals and of a greater capacity for emotional suffering . . . By contrast, the low-score person is hard and rugged, self-reliant, independentminded, responsible and poised" (p. 21). Thus, decreased scores on Tendermindedness signify a more rugged, reality based, independent approach, while increased scores suggest greater sensitivity, pain, and fancifulness.

Some of the Non-Anxious-Maladaptive group's decrease in adaptation derives from a 60% increase in Tendermindedness. Group 2 mothers display marked decreases on this factor, indicating growth towards more practical, problem solving methods.

The fact that Group 3 is judged less adaptive after father absence appears mainly due to an upsurge of depressive, serious, inhibited tendencies. Increased scores in this direction are suggestive of greater rigidity and soberness. Furthermore, "there is a definite slowness and inability to accept and adapt to situations."

Besides the boost to adaptation that Group 2 derives from a less Tendermindedness approach to stress, 2/3 of the mothers in this group manifest a decrease in scores on Submissivenss, Dependence. As the NSQ test manual indicates, persons with higher scores on this factor tend to be "modest, quiet, retiring . . . ready to concede the center of the stage to others rather than argue or clash with them, and sensitive to social approval or disapproval. . . he fears and avoids the clashes which would result from assertive-hostile behavior towards others." Thus, Group 2 is exhibiting greater assertiveness and self-pride when it decreases on the Submissiveness component.

Group 4, which does not change on the broader adaptation index, remains the same on Tendermindedness and Depression, and decreases slightly on Submissiveness.

Discussion

Process Sketches of Criterion Groups

Given the varied and sometimes confusing findings that we have seen, an effort will be made to holistically interpret the meaning of predispositional and mediational configurations.

Group 1. Anxious-Maladaptive Mothers:

(a) Pre-Crisis pattern--busy and hard working. Appear to be straining for some element of financial security, through extra jobs. Have strong roots in military life and activity. Are not emotionally supported by religion or relatives, but nevertheless seem quite adaptive and not anxious.

Surface behavior shows up as healthy but there are underlying feelings of aggression and rejection.

(b) Post-crisis situation pattern--sorely miss husbands and feel afraid and lonely for a long period of time. React completely negatively to separation, wishing for husband's return but taking little pride in own efforts to fill gaps created by his absence.

Mothers work during father absence, citing the self-therapeutic and financial benefits involved and minimizing detrimental effects on their children. Despite marked underlying aggressive drives, no direct anger is acknowledged or expressed. And despite intense feelings of apprehension resulting from husband's departure, the military life is embraced even more strongly. Church attendance increases, perhaps as a means of finding solace or support. Anxiety rises sharply after father separates and stabilizes at a higher level than before. Less adaptive behavior results, primarily because of increased feelings of helplessness combined with defenses of avoidance and denial.

Their sensitivity to rejection and pained response to separation makes one wonder if objective father absence might not have aroused irrational feelings of rejection.

In summary, thoughts are wishful, reminiscent, problem-avoiding. Actions are financially supportive, indirectly help-seeking and self-centered. Feelings are of helplessness, loneliness and fear.

(c) Coping Pattern--inferred as indirectly finding help from others (church, family); denying or minimizing realistic family problems while seeking to escape them; binding fright and loneliness through material pursuits; longing for return of father; turning anger into identification forces.

Group 2. Anxious-Adaptive Mothers:

(a) Pre-crisis pattern--serious financial burdens, with no relief in sight. Anxious; relatively passive, unhappy and emotionally delicate. Seem highly vulnerable to stress or crisis conditions, and without external supports from religion or extended family. Maintain strong ties with military. Closely attuned to children's problems, homebound, and likely to overreact to minor incidents. Overall emotional needs not being satisfied, and relatively unconcerned about issues of rejection.

(b) Post-crisis situation patterns--takes stock of life situation and applies self to new behaviors. Moves towards extended family supports and increased social interaction. Defines specific physical and social problems, and seeks assertively to resolve them (e.g., learning how to drive to further social life and adequacy of family care). Finds immense pride in newfound skills, independence, and inner resources. Accepts own anger to considerable degree and expresses it in appropriate fashion. Has fair awareness of relation of own emotions to problems with children, and concentrates on self-control and setting good examples. Allows self to resent serious impositions, and can use resentment to weaken attachment to an object (as by reducing identification with military life). Experience many realistic problems during father absence but not afraid or lonely. Hints that emerging self-satisfying interests and behaviors (e.g., reading, sports, free movement) will necessitate revised accommodation by husband when he returns.

In summary, thoughts are assertive, angry, self-improving, and problem directed. Actions are self-supportive, help-seeking, and family-centered. Feelings are realistic, available, open, and against the source of frustration, i.e., the military.

(c) Coping pattern--inferred as directly seeking support and companionship from others; realistically defining problems and limitations; pushing for self-awareness and insight without blaming self; using anger to reshape commitments and activities.

Group 3. Non-Anxious, Maladaptive Mothers:

(a) Pre-crisis pattern--hard working, relatively older families with more children and longer marriages. Closely engaged with relatives, are initially adaptive and seem happy in spite of continued financial difficulties. Have had considerable experience with prior separation, but show underlying feelings of insecurity.

(b) Post-crisis situation pattern--basically saddened and less sure of self after separation. Feelings vacillate between anger, loneliness and weakness. Initial nervousness gives way to resignation, and husband's return is eagerly anticipated. Maladaptiveness at Phase 2 is mainly a function of increased depression, although a growing sense of helplessness and insecurity contributes. Subsequent to father absence events become more burdensome, with children harder to manage and social and physical problems keenly felt. Efforts towards finding additional support are weak, but military life is more deeply appreciated.

In summary, thoughts are sad, and uncertain. Actions are sluggish, relatively unassertive, and mostly homebound. Feelings are realistic, but ambivalent and heavy-hearted.

(c) Coping pattern--inferred as mostly giving in to sadness and discouragement; managing as well as possible without actively seeking assistance or new resources.

Group 4. No Change Mothers:

(a) Pre-crisis pattern--somewhat alienated from military, and

sensitive to rejection and unhappiness. Marital dissatisfaction is high, and children are perceived as having few problems. There is strong investment in the church.

(b) Post-crisis situation pattern--relatively unaffected by husband's leaving insofar as child-rearing and difficulties are concerned. No anger is manifest and though worry about family and husband is professed, bland, matter-of-fact reactions belie the sentiment. Attraction for military life wanes noticeably with husband out of the home, while most other interests and pursuits remain status quo. No measurable change is seen in Anxiety or the various components of adaptiveness. The separation experience is viewed as having positive consequences.

In summary, thoughts are relatively untroubled, conventional, and focused on the immediate present, i.e., leaving husband out. Actions are calm and deliberate. Feelings are covered over and vague.

(c) Coping pattern--inferred as meeting continuing reality events in relatively efficient ways; short-lived reaction to separation followed by acceptance of state of "aloneness."

Success of Coping

By and large the present results do seem to point to an array of factors which relate to coping devices. Assuming that increment of upset occurred for all groups following the father absence crisis situation, by the time of Phase 2, differential adjustment modes had clearly separated out. Unfortunately, this investigation did not provide for on the spot measurement of immediate reaction to crisis, and initial upset is inferred from retrospective accounts. Using this source of data, almost all mothers did report increased tension or nervousness, during and right after father's departure.

Group 4 seems to have recovered most readily from a state of stress, and

appears to have quickly returned to a pre-crisis level of functioning or better. Most probably this was so because father's presence in the home had minimal value to begin with, as reflected by the high incidence of marital dissatisfaction. Disruption following father absence in such an instance might be considered reduced by the extent to which mother had practiced getting along without him prior to separation. In fact, given the degree of self-satisfaction observed within Group 4 mothers after separation, one could make a case for more effective adaptation with father away, if only on the basis of personal contentment.

The coping or grappling methods depicted by Groups 1 and 2 seem very comparable to those reported by Caplan, Mason, and Kaplan (1965) in their studies of crisis in parents of premature babies. These authors noted that healthy or successful outcomes derived from three categories of grappling, involving: (a) a cognitive grasp of the crisis situation, (b) handling of feelings, and (c) obtaining help. The Healthy Outcome cases constantly sought accurate information about prematurity, and "perceptions were reality-based and minimally distorted by irrational fantasies." In addition, they were aware of and able to express their negative feelings, and active in seeking help from the community. For the Unhealthy Outcome cases, the reverse was true.

Group 2 or the Anxious-Adaptive mothers were essentially similar to Caplan, Mason, and Kaplan's Healthy Outcome cases, whereas the Group 1 mothers resembled their Unhealthy Outcome cases. The closeness with which the present group's coping patterns adhere to those previously described seems supportive of the above authors' view that: "The varieties of behavior of persons in crisis are classifiable into a relatively small number of patterns."

Lazarus' (1966) recent book on Psychological Stress and The Coping Process presents a valuable scheme for classifying "coping-reaction patterns,"

and for understanding these patterns in relation to critical cognitive operations which are presumed to mediate them.

Two general classes of coping are identified: (1) "action tendencies aimed at eliminating or mitigating the anticipated harmful confrontation," and (2) "purely cognitive maneuvers through which appraisal is altered without action directed at changing the objective situation"--usually called defense mechanisms. Lazarus argues that the coping pattern or strategy selected is based on an appraisal of the consequences of any action tendency (e.g., attack or avoidance), and that this appraisal involves factors inherent in the stress or crisis situation as well as within the psychological structure of the individual concerned.

For the most part coping patterns described in this investigation seem to fall into the direct-action category rather than illustrating defensive-re-appraisals. Only Group 1 displays some evidence of self-deception in the service of reducing stress--in the form of denial or minimization of adjustment difficulties in their children. However, even this observation might be partly accounted for on the basis of lesser availability of Group 1 mothers.

More characteristic of Group 1 are the coping-reaction patterns which Lazarus calls "directly expressed avoidance with fear," and "anger without attack or with the inhibition of expression of anger." It appears that these are mothers who had structured their social and value orientations around the husband's military career prior to the separation crisis. They had marked underlying aggressive drives which, however, were balanced by concerns about rejection. Given these conditions, it may be speculated that father absence aroused considerable threat and anguish, along with aggressive action tendencies, but that stronger internalized sanctions against expression of hostile feelings towards the military were mobilized. Escape from the home

through outside employment could avert further instigation to unacceptable release of aggression by reducing exposure to painful situations (e.g., misbehaving or sad children). Obviously such a coping pattern does not promote mastery of difficulties, and it is not surprising that both anxiety and maladaptiveness increase in this group.

The Group 2 coping pattern seems to correspond closely to one identified by Lazarus as, "actions aimed at strenghtening resources against harm." In addition, there is an element of "directly expressed attack with anger." Mastery attempts via the development of new skills and sources of self-pride were common, and there was little reluctance to find fault with military life. Most striking is the fact that Group 2 mothers incorporated the crisis situation as a springboard for greater self-fulfillment. Whereas these mothers might have been expected to react most adversely to the crisis, generalizing from pre-crisis personality findings, father absence apparently presented them with unaccustomed opportunities for personal achievement. In the near future our research team shall bring you a report on father's reaction to the apparent changes in the wife he left behind--we are now beginning to study the process and problems of the military family's reunion following father absence. Hopefully he will be pleased by his wife's increased sense of adequacy.

The coping pattern most clearly associated with Group 3 seems to be that of "inaction" or absence of any active coping response. Mothers are depressed and feeling helpless, although the presence of some fear and anger disproves total apathy. The most salient factor relating to this pattern appears to be an intense "family boundedness." Group 3 mothers have the longest marriages and largest families, and fewest outside involvements. They are basically insecure and tied to fixed patterns of family roles and behavior. When father departs from the home, real loss is felt but alternative coping actions are not viewed as viable.

The reaction manifested by Group 4 has no counterpart in any classification of coping patterns. Mothers here present a generally bland, undisrupted picture of personal and family behavior--inconsistent with a primary appraisal of threat. If the appraisal of threat depends on the prospect of motive thwarting, as some authors suggest (cf. Mechanic, 1962; Cofer & Appley, 1964), perhaps the behavior of Group 4 can be more easily understood. Since marital dissatisfaction was high in this group it may well be that goals valued by mother were not seriously jeopardized by her husband's departure. To quote Lazarus: "If some future anticipated state or condition is irrelevant to the individual's goals or values, it will not lead to threat appraisal, since the future condition will not harm the individual" (p. 56).

A basic question that has been raised in the literature concerns the possible relationship of pre-crisis personality to successful coping (Caplan, 1965; Caplan et al., 1965). Thus, Caplan has wondered whether crises are states "during which those with healthy personalities inevitably get stronger and those with unhealthy personalities get weaker?" Present data strongly challenge this rhetorical question. Surprisingly, the more successful copers in this study--namely, Group 2 mothers,--were those who scored highest on anxiety and maladaptiveness during the pre-crisis evaluation. Their improved scores following the crisis situation was not simply artifactual either (as a "regression to the mean" phenomena might produce) since control group scores in the same direction did not decrease from Phase 1 to Phase 2.

A major implication of these results concerns the need to focus on the transaction between pre-crisis personality functioning and the total situational configuration. Admittedly the present investigation touched on only some of the relevant parameters within these areas, and the smallness of our sample makes any conclusions tenuous. However, at least in the case of crisis due to father absence it is important to recognize the differential impacts of the crisis situation and its potential for facilitating more adaptive as well as

less adaptive modes of behavior. Certainly any prediction for success of coping based exclusively on considerations of prior personality is likely to be highly inaccurate.

Further research is required to elaborate the relations between successful coping and pre-stress conditions or patterns. Perhaps individuals judged more adequate beforehand can, under certain conditions, be more disturbed by threat than those judged less adequate at the outset! Or possibly, untapped constructive resources in less adequately functioning persons can be released during crisis to produce a serendipitous result. The present study does suggest that elements in the pre-crisis situation which determine adjustment can become incompatible with those required for successful coping with crisis. For example, mothers whose core sources of self-esteem and life satisfaction resided entirely in an established pattern of family and marital relations became apathetic and depressed when family living was disrupted by father absence.

A number of other points are suggested by our findings:

1. It appears that any accurate prediction of coping behavior must derive from consideration of a complex pattern of predispositional and mediational variables. Predispositional factors seem especially important, however, in developing a baseline for understanding the process of coping behavior.

2. There is good reason to question further the idea that prior experience with a crisis situation leads to more adequate coping with subsequent exposures to that crisis. In the present study, the groups most experienced with separation and mobility, i.e., Groups 1 and 3, were less successful in their coping than the least experienced group (Group 2).

3. It is evident that all groups turned to the extended family in their

moment of crisis, by moving towards relatives. Unfortunately we did not obtain information on the quality of relationship between mothers and their proximal relatives, and cannot adequately evaluate the factor of social support. We can only speculate that extra support from the kinship system is of great value to father-absent families.

4. The present findings taken as a whole offer some support to preventive recommendations made by Rapoport (1962) and Dewees, Johnson, Sarvis and Pope (1961). The former recommends as general therapeutic activities (1) keeping explicit focus on the crisis and managing the affect; (2) offering basic information; and (3) bridging the gap between the client and community resources. Dewees et al. make a case for rapid interviewing following the crisis situation to avoid maladaptive coping with resistance to intervention and insight.

As we have seen, mothers reacting to a father absence crisis situation should not generally be expected to seek direct assistance, even though family or personal difficulties may be widespread. Only Group 2 sought direct help from others, while Group 1 preferred escape or avoidance from problems and Group 3 became depressed and helpless.

It seems then that the development of any intervention program ought to be based on one of two methods: (1) careful monitoring of the children in father absent families by the school system so that significant child disturbances may be identified. Through this school identification process, mothers may subsequently be worked with when necessary; (2) standard pre-post crisis situation discussion groups for mothers facing the prospect of experiencing father absence. Both the military and civilian communities could assume responsibility for initiating these groups, with attendance compulsory insofar as this is feasible.

5. Our data adds to the pool of evidence indicating that mother's reaction to stress is of prime importance in arriving at an understanding of reactive disorders in children. Preparatory counseling and primary prevention programs for mothers is at least as important as programs for their children in times of family stress such as that posed by father absence.

6. With regard to the issue of mobility, it is proposed that father absence and the family's adjustment to this absence may be the critical determinants behind problems associated with mobility. This issue deserves careful consideration.

7. The utility of grouping adjustment to father absence on the basis of changes in Anxiety and Adaptation is supported given the communality of other factors (predispositional and mediating) which characterize the groups formed. It seems particularly useful to consider not only individual variables but "family styles" and "family tasks" at certain epochs in the family development, as well as specific aspects of the crisis situation. A multidimensional rather than a single-factor approach is needed.

In closing, I would like to note that our current efforts (frenzied though they have been at times) have spurred us on to asking many more researchable questions. The following seem especially pertinent to us:

1. To what extent do patterns of reaction exhibited under crisis situations comprise personality functioning during non-crisis periods? Is it possible for an individual to have a history of coping with threat or crisis which is not reflected in a pre-crisis personality assessment?

We had no data on prior coping experiences or dispositions and therefore cannot comment on consistency or variability in coping, or the relationship of prior coping behavior to current measures of anxiety and adaptation.

2. What relationships, if any, exist between the coping patterns employed by mothers and their child's reaction to crisis?

We hope to explore this particular question in a separate paper.

3. How do the present findings relate to the process and problems of readjustment when the father returns to the family system?

The third phase of this longitudinal study is designed to provide data bearing on this question.

4. And finally, will an independent longitudinal study of military father absence reveal similar results viz a viz pre-crisis, post-crisis, and coping patterns?

Such an investigation is currently programmed to begin this year, with provisions being made to acquire data on a large number of families, as well as to improve procedures for analyzing, measuring and evaluating coping behavior.

Summary

As part of a continuing longitudinal investigation of the impact of father absence in military families, the present paper focused on factors relating to mother's success in coping with the crisis created by father absence. Mothers were given an extensive battery of sociometric, psychological and interview procedures prior to husband's departure and 6 to 9 months after he had departed. On the basis of change scores in Anxiety and Adaptiveness, four subgroups presumed to reflect different coping outcomes were selected. A detailed analysis of predispositional (i.e., social-situational; subjective-reactive) variables was made, and inferences were

drawn about differential patterns of coping employed by each of the subgroups.

The main general conclusions were as follows:

1. Present findings provided support for the notion that "the varieties of behavior of persons in crisis are classifiable into a relatively small number of patterns." (cf. Caplan, Lazarus.)

2. Coping patterns cannot be predicted by any single dimension, and expectations based exclusively on pre-crisis personality functioning are likely to be highly inaccurate. Present data emphasizes the need for a multidimensional approach, with a focus on the transaction between personality structure and the total situational configuration.

3. It is important to recognize the possible differential impacts of the father absence crisis situation and its potential for facilitating more adaptive as well as less adaptive modes of behavior.

4. Intervention programs to assist mothers in developing resources for more successful coping would appear to be of considerable value.

References

1. Baker, S. L., Fagen, S. A., Fischer, E. G., Janda, E. J., & Cove, L. A. Impact of father absence on personality factors of boys. I. An evaluation of the military family's adjustment. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of The American Orthopsychiatric Association, Washington, D. C., March 21, 1967.

2. Becker, W. C., Peterson, D. R., Luria, Z., Shoemaker, D. J., & Hellmer, L. A. Relations of factors derived from parent interview ratings to behavior problems of five-year-olds. Child Development, 1962, 33:509-535.

3. Caplan, G. Opportunities for school psychologists in the primary prevention of mental disorders in children. In Nadine Lambert (Ed.), The protection and promotion of mental health in schools. 1965. Pp. 9-22.

4. Caplan, G., Mason, E., & Kaplan, D. Four studies of crisis in parents of prematures. Community Mental Health Journal, 1965, 1:149-161.

5. Cattell, R. & Scheier, I. H. Handbook for the IPAT Anxiety Scale Questionnaire. IPAT, 1963.

6. Cofer, C. N. & Appley, M. H. Motivation: theory and research. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1964.

7. Darbonne, A. R. Crisis: a review of theory, practice and research. Psychotherapy: Theory, Research and Practice, 1967, 4:49-56.

8. Dewees, R. F., Johnson, R. F., Sarvis, M. A., & Pope, S. T. An open service in a university psychiatric clinic. Mental Hygiene, 1961. Pp. 47, 57.

9. Lazarus, R. S. Psychological stress and the coping process. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1966.

10. Mechanic, D. Students under stress. New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1962.

11. Murphy, L. B. & Associates. The widening world of childhood: paths toward mastery. New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1962.

12. Pedersen, F. A. & Sullivan, E. J. Relationships among geographical mobility, parental attitudes and emotional disturbances in children. American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 1964, 34:575-580.

13. Peterson, D. B. Behavior problems of middle childhood. Journal of Consulting Psychology, 1961, 25:205-209.

14. Rapoport, L. Working with families in crisis: an exploration in preventive intervention. Social Work, 7(3), 1962.

15. Scheier, I. H. & Cattell, R. Handbook for the Neuroticism Scale Questionnaire. Institute for Personality & Ability Testing, 1961.

16. Stricker, G. The construction and partial validation of an objectively scorable apperception test. Journal of Personality, 1962, 30:51-62.

Footnotes

1. Data for this study were collected as part of a project supported by the U.S. Army Medical Research and Development Command, Office of The Surgeon General, Washington, D. C. (Project #62156011 3A025601A826.)

2. Presented at the meeting of The American Psychological Association, Washington, D. C., September 4, 1967.

3. A third phase examination is taking place 9 to 12 months after reunion of the father with his family. Such an evaluation will hopefully permit analysis of tenacity of changes measured in Phase 2, and problems of family reintegration experienced upon father's return.

4. Only in the unusual circumstance where scores are extremely low to begin with does this assumption seem invalid. For example, a complete lack of anxiety is not to be taken as an ideal for mental health--to the contrary it may suggest severe psychopathology.

TABLE 1

Adaptation

Anxiety	Lower	Higher	No Change
Higher	Group 1 (N=5)	Group 2 (N=6)	N=0
Lower	Group 3 N=2	N=0	N=1
No Change	N=3	N=1	Group 4 N=2

TABLE 2

Prdispositional Variables

	Group 1 (N=5)	Group 2 (N=6)	Group 3 (N=5)	Group 4 (N=4)
Family Style Husband's Rank	2/5 E-5, 3/5 E-6	/6 E-4, 4/6 E-5, 1/6 E-6	1/5 E-5, 4/5 E-6	2/4 E-5, 2/4 E-6
Religion	2/5 Catholic 3/5 Protestant	/6 Catholic /6 Protestant	1/5 Catholic 4/5 Protestant	1/4 Catholic 3/4 Protestant
Education	All H.S.	ll H.S.	All H.S.	Mostly H.S. One College
	Ave. = 10.8 gr.	ve. = 10.8 gr.	Ave. = 10.6 gr.	Ave. = 10.5 gr.
Birthplace	All U.S.A.	/6 U.S.A.	4/5 U.S.A.	2/4 U.S.A.
Age - Mother	Ave. = 29.6 yrs.	ve. = 25.6 yrs.	Ave. = 31.2 yrs.	Ave. = 30.5 yrs.
Age - Father	Ave. = 31.6 yrs.	ve. = 29.5 yrs.	Ave. = 35.8 yrs.	Ave. = 33.7 yrs.
Length of Marriage	10.8 yrs.	6.7 yrs.	11.6 yrs..	8.8 yrs.
Number of Children	2.8	1.8	4.8	2.5
Years in Service	13 years	10 years	16.8 years	14 years
Father's Employment History	Clerical, sales & Service wkrs.	Clerical, sales & Service wkrs.	Clerical & Service wkrs.	Technical, Clerical & Service wkrs.
Work Situation	4/5 Fs moonlight 2/5 Ms working	No Fs moonlight 1/6 Ms working	3/5 Fs moonlight 1/5 Ms working	1/4 Fs moonlight 1/4 Ms working
Financial Status				
Fs Monthly Salary	$ 421	$ 278	$ 507	$ 362
Debts	1520	1733	1475	1575
Installments	118	110	169	215
Bank Account	1060	192	580	1250
Church Activity	Rel. inactive	Rel. inactive		Rel. active
Marital Dissatisfaction				Rel. Hi
Military Identification I	Rel. Hi	Rel. Hi		Low
Perception of Child as Problem		Rel. Hi perception of Child problems		Rel. Low perception of Child problems

TABLE 2--Continued

	Group 1 (N=5)	Group 2 (N=6)	Group 3 (N=5)	Group 4 (N=4)
Social Participation	Rel. Low w/relatives Rel. Hi w/military Rel. Low for Church	Rel. Low w/relatives Rel. Low for Church	High w/relatives Rel. Low overall	High for Church
Separation Experience				
Long-term (> 6 months)				
Number (Average)	1	0.8	1.4	0.8
Months (Average)	14.6	6.8	17.6	8.8
Short-term (< 6 months > 1 week)		Rel. Low in Separations		
Number (Average)	2.3	3.3	2.8	6.8
Months (Average)	4.6	6.2	5.4	21.8
Mobility by Mother				
Ave. No. of moves	3.4	3.8	4.4	4.3
Mother's Personality				
Anxiety	0/3 Very Anxious	Rel. High Anxiety 3/6 Very Anxious	2/5 Very Anxious	0/4 Very Anxious
Adaptiveness	Rel. Hi Adaptiveness 1/5 Maladaptive	Rel. Low Adaptiveness 4/6 Maladaptive	Rel. Hi Adaptiveness 0/5 Maladaptive	1/4 Maladaptive
-Dependent/Helplessness	Low	Hi		
-Depression		Hi	Rel. Low	Rel. Hi
-Submissiveness		Hi		
Objective Apperception				
Aggression	Rel. Hi			
Rejection	Rel. Hi	Rel. Low		Rel. Hi
Inadequacy			Rel. Hi	
Dependency				
Neutral				Rel. Lo

TABLE 3

Mediational Variables

Social Situational	Group 1 (N=5)	Group 2 (N=6)	Group 3 (N=5)	Group 4 (N=4)
Finances	Same - Not worse	Mostly worse	Same - worse	Mostly same
Health	Same	Mostly same	Mostly same	Mosely same
Housing	Slightly worse	Same or better	Mostly same	Same
Move Occurred	Mostly Yes	Yes	Mostly Yes	Mostly Yes
Out-of-town Move	60%	50%	60%	25%
Family Supports	60% moved to or near relatives 60% living with or near relatives	67% moved near relatives 67% living near relatives	60% moved near relatives 80% living near relatives	50% moved near relatives or was joined by relative 50% living with or near relatives
Husband's Assignment (% Viet Nam)	40%	0%	0%	50%
Mother's Work Status	80% worked 60% took jobs	33% worked 17% took jobs	20% worked 0% took jobs	75% worked 50% took jobs
Correspondence	Mutually frequent	Mutually frequent	Mutually frequent & wife more often	Mutually frequent
Reactive Subjective				
Perception of Husband's Attitude	Supportive	Supportive	Supportive	Supportive
Change in Perception of Child's Problems	Mostly improved	Slightly improved	Same	About same
Military Identification	(60% increased) (40% lowered) Mixed with balance toward increased	(0% increased) (80% lowered) Mostly lowered None increased	(75% increased) (25% lowered) Mostly increased	(25% increased) (75% lowered) Mostly lowered
Difficulty Moving	Missed husband or No comment	Physical & social adjustment	Physical & social adjustment	No difficulties or No comment

TABLE 3--Continued

	Group 1 (N=5)	Group 2 (N=6)	Group 3 (N=5)	Group 4 (N=4)
Son's Difficulties Moving	Wide ranging	Wide ranging	Wide ranging	Mostly None
Son's Adjustment	Mostly satisfactory (1 better)	Mostly satisfactory (1 better)	Mostly satisfactory (1 worse)	Mostly satisfactory (1 better)
Reaction to Father Leaving (by Mother)	60% accepted & worried	50% accted & worried	60% accepted & worried	75% accepted & worried
	No anger expressed	3/6 expressed anger	1/5 expressed anger	No anger expressed
Son's Reaction to Father Leaving	Mostly accepted Many more dependent	None accepted Mostly upset	Some accepted Mostly more dependent	Half accepted Others mixed reaction
	One very upset	Majority more dependent	Some very upset	
Perceived Hardships	Mostly fear-loneliness	Specified problem or no comment No mention of fear or loneliness	Many said no comment or none. Others divide loneliness-helplessness, family supports, & relative conflicts	Specified problem or no comment
Mother's Self-Evaluation of Change	Mostly lonely-nervous 0% positive remarks	Mostly positive	Divided between lonely-nervous & positive remarks	Mostly positive remarks
Perception of Difficulty w/Children	60% management problems w/children	50% management problems w/children	100% management problems with children	0% management problems w/children
Social Participation	Church attendance Up	Church attendance Up	Church attendance Up or same	Church attendance-same
	Up with civilians Down with military Up-Same w/relatives	Up-Same w/civilians Mostly down w/military Mostly Up w/relatives	Up-Same w/civilians Same w/military Mixed Up-Down with relatives	Up-Same w/civilians Down w/military Up-Same w/relatives
		Rel. Hi Social Partic.		

TABLE 4

Changes in Adaptation Index

	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4
Adaptations	Down	Up	Down	Same-Up
Tendermindedness	100% increase	83% Decrease	60% Increase 40% Same	Same
Depression	Mixed	Mixed	100% Increase	Same
Submissiveness	Mixed	67% Decrease	Mostly same	

Predispositional
Factors
Mediational
Factors
Coping Mechanisms
Adaptiveness
(Success of
Coping)

Fig. 1